THE

CHRISTIAN FREEMAN.

VOL. IV.] DECEMBER, 1835. [No. XXXVIII.

SUBSTANCE OF A CHARGE

Delivered by the Rev. R. Wilson, Belfast, at the Ordination of the Rev. Frederick Buick to the Pastoral Care of the First Presbyterian Secession Congregation of Ahoghill, on Tuesday, November the 3d, 1835.

THE relation of pastor and people being now perfected by the solemn act of ordination, I am called on, in compliance with a practice I trust as useful as it is well intended, to address to both a few words on the responsibilities and duties arising out of this interesting relation. Jesus Christ, as the King and Head of Zion, having instituted, for wise and gracious purposes, a system of Gospel ministration, it becomes us, as we would be faithful and approved at the last, to see that the instrumentality of salvation be wisely and well directed to the great objects which it is intended to accomplish. An important portion of this instrumentality rests with those who labour in word and doctrine. The minister of Christ is expected to maintain all good fidelity in the various departments of the sacred office, and to be "instant in season and out of season," for the advancement of that cause which lies near to the Redeemer's heart. Upon the people, also, to whom his ministrations are addressed, and for whose souls he is bound to watch, as one who "shall give account," devolve obligations equally momentous, and equally affecting the springs of human action, the whole economy of life, and the complexion of final destiny. The relative position of pastor and people, like all other relationships, embraces duties and engagements, from the honest discharge of which, neither must harbour for a moment the cowardly thought of shrinking. Besides, the effort to attain a

complete riddance from Christian obligation, is as vain as it is dangerous and infatuated. Where this obligation is met by the minister and his people with a sanctified devotedness to the service of God, and a vigorous and grace-founded resolution to be on the Lord's side, it will be felt as the silken bond of heavenly union; but where a bad heart puts forth a ruthless hand to sever the connexion which it has formed, it becomes chains of iron and a wall of adamant, to palsy the godless and hopeless attempt. Like Jonah, you may as well endeavour to flee from the presence of the Lord, as to escape the searching hand of Christian obligation.

It will not be expected that in the present address I should enter minutely into a specification of the duties, responsibilities, trials, and encouragements of the Gospel minister; or, that I should labour to stir up the minds of the people to a remembrance of *every* branch of that devoted and Christian piety, which, as a worshipping congregation, they are bound to maintain. On each of these great classes of relative duty and obligation, a separate treatise might be written. As a part of the public services of the day, which services must be necessarily characterized by brevity, it will be desirable merely to catch at a few of the more prominent points, and present them to the parties concerned, with hints and suggestions for future consideration. Nor shall I hesitate to sacrifice attempts at novelty to utility—little ambitious of an attainment which, on such a subject, is hardly possible; and if reached, might not prove altogether profitable. With these explanations, *allow me, Sir, proceeding according to the usual order, to commence with addressing a few observations to you, on the high and responsible office to which you have been this day solemnly designated.*

1. In the first place, then, remember that the office of the ministry with which you are invested, instead of superseding, presses home upon your heart the necessity for the ceaseless cultivation of practical piety. A godless minister of the Gospel is the veriest wretch that treads upon God's earth. Heartless and hopeless, he drags out a diseased and condemned moral existence along the very confines of heaven. He repeats the precious promises of God, but they have no balm for *his* spirit; he declares the warnings of the law, but they have not alarmed his own soul to flee from the wrath to come. In the ears of the congregation he announces that "the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God;" and the scene is more awful in God's sight, than that which would be presented, were one of the judges of the land to put on the black cap, and pronounce

sentence of death upon himself. How shall impiety stand before the unveiled face of eternity? Above all, what shall be the torment of the godless minister, who preaches up heaven to others, and chooses hell for his own portion? But, my dear brother, hoping better things of *you*, and things that accompany salvation, permit me still to urge the importance of sedulous and unremitting attention to the interests of your own immortality. God has graciously appointed means for keeping the lamp of divine grace burning and brilliant in the soul, and these means are as indispensable to you, as to the members of your charge. In common with them, you need to be "stablished, strengthened, settled," in christian principle and christian practice. Is it necessary for them to "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest" the living oracles of God, for "their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace"?—the same necessity presses with still greater urgency upon *you*. Do they come to a throne of mercy, to seek for the refreshing of their hearts by the effusion of the Spirit from on high? it is only by means of similar continued applications on your part, that your soul can preserve the perennial verdure and beauty of "willows by the water courses," or of a field which the Lord hath blessed. Does the hour of religious meditation spread the calm of heaven's tranquillity around the retirement of the Christian people? and are we to suppose that the same exercise is undesirable for the pastor, or that its consolations are less requisite to his agitated bosom? It is all a mistake, and one of diabolical origin, to surmise that public ministration may be safely substituted for private devotion. Let the humbling of the soul before the throne in the closet—let the exercise of deep penitential abasement in the presence of God—let the taking hold of the strength of Jehovah by the precious promises in the silence of retirement be abandoned, were it but for a season, and the neglect will soon wither the minister's heart, and will also be followed by decay in the life, and richness, and power of the public services of Christianity. Observe the weight, and try to feel the force of the comprehensive direction addressed by an inspired apostle to one of his fellow-labourers in the church of Christ;—"Take heed unto thyself," followed, it is true, by a warning to be attentive to the doctrine; but it is remarkable that the Spirit of God points our first and earliest concern to the unspeakable importance of practical piety. And it is further observable that he connects this in a very striking manner with the success of ministerial agency. "Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine—continue in them; for in

so doing, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." As, therefore, my dear friend, you value your own soul, and as your heart yearns after success in winning the souls of others to Christ, cultivate habits of close walking with God; labour to experience more and more of the power of godliness upon your every faculty and feeling; seek for the fresh and unfailing communications of divine grace to your own spirit;—and then, out of the abundance of a heart filled "unto all the fulness of God," your mouth will speak the glories of redeeming love, and your life will be as the sign and seal of heaven upon your ministerial labours.

2. Be careful and pains-taking in your preparation for the pulpit. Such is the variety of mental cast and calibre, that it is impossible to discover any mode of pulpit preparation, which could be confidently recommended for universal adoption. Some of the most eloquent and powerful of modern preachers write and commit slavishly to memory every word of their discourses; others dispense with the plan of writing altogether; while a third, and greatly more numerous class, bestow much care on the arrangement of the leading thoughts, digest the subject thoroughly in their minds, and, with considerable fluency and ease, clothe their ideas in extemporaneous phraseology. The man of well-regulated mind, who has formed habits of diligent and judicious application, will soon ascertain for himself what plan of study is best suited to the honourable situation which he fills; and those of a different stamp and disposition, will carry out no regular system of mental enterprise; so that, in every view of the case, it were a work of supererogation to do more than glance, as we have done, at some of the different modes of preparation. There are certain directions, however, which meet every diversity of circumstance; and these embrace fields of study which it is inexcusable in the Christian minister to leave uncultivated. I allude not to the science and literature of the age, though many departments of these are highly desirable for the expansive and humanizing influence which they exert on mind and manners; but I allude to a deep and thorough acquaintance with the word of God. Science is vigorously pushing forward her outposts; we are hearing every day of the march of knowledge. A spirit of philosophical investigation is abroad; this spirit plunges into ocean's depths, and it penetrates the bowels of the earth, and it rises to the sun and moon and stars, the glorious uplands of creation, and it lays at our feet the rich fruits of many a painful discovery. With what unwearied assiduity does the intellectual enterprise of modern

times peruse the lines which are traced on the ample volume of creation, though it may be too blind to recognize in them the hand-writing of God. Now, were there no higher motive, is not such conduct, characterized as it is by a vigorous exercise of mind, sufficient to provoke the minister of Christ to intellectual emulation, that he may not allow his divinely appointed office to fall under disrespect. I would, therefore, urge the propriety of your making constant advances in mental culture, and especially in acquaintance with sacred literature. Let the Bible be your inseparable companion. By all means avail yourself of the best helps within your reach for the better understanding of the book of revelation; and, above all, improve and augment your knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek originals. The giants of the glorious reformation—men who shook systems and kingdoms—men who wielded the burning thunderbolts of truth against opposing error—were men of solid learning and of sound theological knowledge, which they imbibed at the very fountain. The history of the illustrious Luther, and of the immortal Calvin, sufficiently corroborates my assertion on this point. Look, also, to one who with these may stand forward as the first three—John Knox, the reformer of Scotland—and you find him, at a rather advanced period of life, actually commencing the study of the Hebrew language, and making considerable proficiency in spite of all disadvantages. Taking these as your distinguished models in the study of the word of God, and being careful to redeem time in order to prosecute that study with success, you will be mighty in the Scriptures, and your sentiments will acquire a firmness of texture, and a consistency of relationship, which are not among the products of superficial reading or second-hand information.

3. In your public discourses, be pointed and individualizing in the statement and application of divine truth. I assume that your great object will be the salvation of souls;—the turning of sinners to God, and the edifying the body of Christ. This object kept steadily in view, will save you from bringing to the house of God a collection of specious generalities, which can serve no other purpose than to afford decent amusement to the auditory. No other purpose, did I say! Yes, they do serve another purpose—they murder precious time, and pour the blood of souls into the minister's skirts. In preaching the glorious Gospel, there must be faithful dealing with those whom we shall meet before the judgment-seat of Christ. Now, one important rule for securing this faithfulness, is to be plain and pointed in declaring the message of God. No part of his

counsel must be kept back, but the discoveries of both law and Gospel must be put forward with judgment and discrimination. The plainest preaching is the best, and along with plainness there must be point; the sentiments must bear distinctly on the case to which they are addressed. What should be thought of the skill or sanity of the medical man who would mix up all the drugs of which his memory could supply the names, and prescribe the mixture for some unfortunate patient? What good result could be anticipated from such delirious treatment? And yet there is a way of mixing up the truths of divine revelation, which renders them certainly not less deleterious to the health of the soul. When the minister publishes the denunciations of God's law, he must not be like "the madman who scatters firebrands, arrows and death." Feeling the burden of the Lord upon his heart, he must tell of Sinai's thunders, while the deep concern of his own soul, and the distinct announcement of the anger of the Lord, will say to the people individually, "Thou art the man."

Let the ingenuity and energy of your mind, my dear friend, be employed in hunting out and exposing the disguises of sin, and in labouring to make the transgressor feel that he stands unsheltered and alone in the presence of an offended God. Never must the pulpit be degraded by the entrance into it of private pique, or vexatious feeling engendered from without—the practice were as unmanly as it is unchristian. But there is the widest possible difference between this and rending the miserable apologies with which men try to quiet their own consciences in the pursuit of irreligious courses, and shivering to atoms the flimsy excuses which they put forward for the breach of positive and acknowledged obligation. The same judgment must distinguish your use of the promises of God, lest you should be instrumental in cherishing a false peace, or weakening the operation of that which is true. Wielding, with skilful hand, the sword of the Spirit, you will cut "in sunder" the sinner's false hopes; while with the same hand you will, as it were, point him to "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world;"—and thus wielded, the word of God will be found "quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." But as I promised no more than some scattered hints permit me to remark—

4. In the last place, that much depends on catechising, visitation of families, Sabbath-schools and Bible classes. In every

sphere of life, an important agency for good or evil is a consistent uniform character. "What a pity that he should ever come out of the pulpit," is, in general, no great recommendation of a minister of Christ. Remember, that if there be not a first-sight and palpable correspondence between your pulpit life and your private life, few will be over fastidious about preferring the charge of inconsistency. They may not, it is true, have the manhood to put forward an open accusation—they may not even throw their surmises into the circulating medium of assassin calumny; but what is at least as ruinous to *your* success, and *their* salvation, they will apply them as a powerful soporific to the awakenings of their own consciences. This is an evil against which the commissioned servant of Jesus should ever guard with trembling anxiety. It may not be in his power, indeed, to annihilate at once the slanderous figments of an unsanctified imagination, roused into ten-fold activity by the suggestions of a bad heart; but, under the divine blessing, a life of Christian devotedness will, in the end, put down all such unprincipled opposition. *Your* situation, however, promises a reasonable share of comfort in the discharge of the duties of the sacred office; and, therefore, the great concern with you should be, to let your character and conduct be the echo of the faithful announcements from the pulpit. Let the intercourse of the week be a standing testimony to your people that you are the same man, the same in religious principle and power, who addresses them on the Sabbath, and not a moral changeling. I speak not from the shadow of doubt respecting your steady Christian deportment; but I would have the vast importance of these things, deeply and indelibly imprinted on your heart. As the result of a little experience, I would suggest that, in ministerial visitation, where you discover neglect of religious duty, you should not rest satisfied with a mere address, however pointed and pertinent, to the delinquent. You must find out the secret apology which, in such cases, a man makes to his own conscience for a course that meets its disapprobation, and having found it, you must labour for its destruction. Be affectionate; but be faithful. Exert yourself in crucifying such apologies, as you would exert yourself to rescue a beloved relation, a father or a sister, from the flames. Perhaps the most effective instrumentality for those unhappy cases is, a close and searching system of interrogation, accompanied with suitable passages of that word which liveth and abideth for ever. Work too with all your might the machinery of Sabbath-schools and Bible classes. Be indefatigable in your anxiety to instil the precious truths of re-

velation into the youthful mind. Remember that you profess to follow the shepherd who carries the lambs in his bosom. Let it therefore be your delight, as it is your duty, to engage young hearts in the service of the Redeemer; and to train them to search the Scriptures, which are able to make wise to salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus.

In the discharge of these, and of all the duties of your sacred calling, seek the guidance of God's good Spirit, and exercise self-denying and entire dependence on his gracious operation. Commit your way to God, and he will bring it to pass, for many such things are with him. May he keep you heart warm in the sunshine of his countenance, and fill you with the dews of heavenly influence, that you may be blessed and made a blessing.

Permit me now, in the same spirit of meekness, to address a few plain observations to you who are the members of this congregation. As a Christian people, you have exercised the sacred right guaranteed to you by the laws of the New Testament; I mean that of choosing your own pastor, who has been this day ordained among you, according to the forms of the Presbyterian Secession Church. For this great principle, the Fathers of the Secession contended in opposition to the policy and power of a prevailing party in the Erastian Church of Scotland. It was perilous, indeed, to oppose the then dominant ecclesiastical authorities; but the Fishers and Erskines and Wilsons of other days, took up the cause of truth, against error and heresy, and they rescued the rights of the Christian people from the grasp of Presbyterian Popery. To their prayerful deliberation, and to the firm stand which they were enabled to make, we are mainly indebted, under God, for the Scriptural liberty which our congregations at the present moment enjoy. While, therefore, as a people, you embalm in your hearts the memory of such worthies, and testify your gratitude to God for the blessings imparted to you through their instrumentality, fail not to recognize the additional obligation under which you are placed, to cherish affectionate regard for the man of your united choice. What I have to say to you may be thrown into two or three general remarks.

1. Embrace every opportunity, and seize upon every legitimate agency within your reach, for strengthening the hands of your pastor. Where the people entertain true attachment to their minister, and, I trust and believe, my friends, that yours is of the genuine stamp, it will dictate a variety of means for promoting his comfort, and enlarging the sphere of his useful-

ness. On your own earnest and unanimous invitation, he comes among you from a remote part of the country, a stranger—let your conduct satisfy him that he is neither forsaken nor friendless. Let him find in you the kind feeling that smooths the rugged path of life, and the sympathy that blesses him who gives and him who receives its balmy sweetness. You have already willingly pledged yourselves to contribute liberally to his maintenance; let that pledge be redeemed; and on the principle of plain honesty—the principle of even-handed justice—"that the labourer is worthy of his hire," be determined, that you will not allow your pastor's energies to be frozen beneath the cold hand of poverty. Were congregations aware how detrimental it is to their own interests to expose the ministers of the Gospel to the pinchings of embarrassment—to heap unnecessary vexations on them in the shape of a host of petty annoyances—to deny them the means of decent subsistence—to break and grind their hearts under a painful inability to meet pressing demands—there would be more cordial exertion to promote the comfort and respectability of the Christian pastor. I feel that I am addressing the wise, to whom a word on this subject is sufficient; and, therefore, I pass on to notice other means of encouraging your minister in the discharge of his arduous duties.

Your minister's appearance in the pulpit must be preceded by close and studious preparation; and for this reason, you should not needlessly trespass on his time. It is wonderful to what expense of comfort, health, and strength, we are sometimes put by a single inconsiderate person. The season which it was sought to devote to the diligent study of the Bible, with a view to the public services of the sanctuary, introduces to us some visitor who has got too much time on his hands, and there he sits for hours, talking the silliest and most uninteresting generalities, and, in the end, leaving the pastor the very agreeable alternative of standing forward unprepared, or of wasting the lamp of life upon midnight study. Beware, my friends, of such cruelty; for cruelty it is of the most heartless kind. Leave to the enemies of your minister, should he be unhappy enough to have them, thus to weaken his hands by interfering with the season of his studious retirement.

Influenced by the same spirit of kindness, with the higher motive of obedience to the divine command, be regular and punctual in your attendance on public ordinances. The minister should be in his place not later than the appointed time; and yet the minister should be the last person to enter the house of God. To commence the services of the Sabbath to a mere

handful of the congregation, would cool down the warm energies of an apostle. I remember having some time since expressed my surprise to a public lecturer of eminence, and one who was full of enthusiasm in his profession, that he did not, on a certain public occasion, exhibit a more vigorous and spirited elocution. His reply was given promptly, and it ought to be announced to Christian congregations. "I glanced into the apartment," said he, "near the hour for commencing, and seeing very few persons assembled, I felt so chilled, that I did not recover myself till near the close of the lecture." Now, on this occasion, the meeting was numerously and respectably attended; but for want of punctuality, and because those who came, came after the dropping-in fashion, the entertainment provided for them grew comparatively cold and cheerless. This is human nature; and it may suggest to you an unspeakably important means of pouring life and power into the ministrations of your pastor. In this, as in every other department of the good work, let the eldership take the lead, and by their example, and by seasonable admonition, encourage you all to do what after all is a solemn duty to God, to your pastor, to your fellow-worshippers, and to your own souls.

2. Connect punctual attendance on public worship with the faithful observance of family religion and secret prayer.

Thankful that your eyes once more behold your teacher, lose no opportunity which God in his providence affords, of meeting in the house of prayer. "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is." But entertain not the delusive imagination that this constitutes the whole of Christianity, and is the full discharge of your obligations. There is hope of the man who cherishes a regard for the sanctuary, though it is a wretchedly curtailed religion which shuts itself up within the confines of a few hours of the Lord's day. You will not be able to answer at the tribunal of Christ, unless your faith and holiness exceed the faith and holiness of the Scribes and Pharisees. Some appear to be very religious when men are looking at them; but they dare to be very irreligious when nothing but the all-seeing eye of God is upon them. Such are influenced by a reverence for man, and a contempt for God; they crouch like guilty slaves before the idol of public sentiment, while they bluster with maniac bravado before the majesty and glory of the Lord God of Israel. "Be not ye like unto them." Carry the purity and power of your holy faith into all your domestic arrangements. Go from the throne of grace to the house of God; and when you again visit your

homes, pour out your hearts in supplication to your Father who seeth in secret. Let your houses be so many Bethels, where God is worshipped, and let the genius of truth, and holiness and integrity, preside over all your worldly avocations. And when you approach a throne of grace, pray for a double portion of the Holy Spirit to rest upon your pastor. Commend him to the care of that Saviour who loves his people, and redeems them from all their troubles; pleading that Emmanuel may bless his labours, and crown them with a harvest of salvation. Bear him upon your hearts in prayer; and this will be the best means of advancing *his* spiritual interests and *your own*. Be active in the discharge of Christian duty. Harass not your minister with whining, sickening apologies, for the neglect of family worship and secret prayer, while you admit their importance and obligation. Engage in them with heart and mind; they are God's vehicles of rich communication to man. Gratefully avail yourselves of them, as the means of deriving from the eternal fountain of good, quickening, and comfort, and edification.

3. Keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. The time was when symptoms of temporary distraction appeared among you. That time is happily gone by. A delightful tranquillity now pervades your congregation. Surely, my friends, this is a token for good; and, duly improved, will draw down a store of rich blessing upon your heads. Has the spirit of harmony breathed into your breasts the soft and placid strains of heaven? Cherish the kindly influence by a faithful discharge of the good offices which Christianity enjoins. But let it be the unity of the Spirit, which you will endeavour to keep in the bond of peace. Unity in wickedness will be dashed and broken by the iron sceptre of the King of Zion; unity, upon a "*do-nothing*" principle, will be swept away by the besom of destruction. But the unity of devotedness to God and zealous activity in his service, which obtains among sanctified hearts and enlightened understandings, is a unity which God approves, and which the combined powers of earth and hell shall never be able to sever. This is the unity which binds the redeemed to God and to each other, in the bonds of everlasting love. Endeavour to cast yourselves into the arms of this unity. Take this unity and bind it in the bond of peace. Unitedly encourage your pastor to hold missionary and prayer meetings through the congregation, as an efficient agency for establishing and strengthening the Redeemer's kingdom. Unitedly co-operate with his efforts by Bible classes and Sabbath-schools, to train

up your youth in the instruction of the Scriptures, which are able to make wise unto salvation. Unitedly adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things, living soberly, righteously, and godly in the world, and remembering that you must all soon appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, to answer for the deeds done in the body. "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

FALLS OF NIAGARA.

THE grandeur and sublimity of this scenery is above all description. It must be *felt* in order to be comprehended; and to be felt as it should be, it must be seen. A river of two thousand miles, after having expanded itself into a chain of vast inland seas, seeks an outlet through a ledge of solid strata of limestone rocks, and is precipitated one hundred and sixty-five feet in a single fall of perpendicular height into the abyss below. Dr. Dwight estimates that eighty-five millions of tons of water pass over the falls in an hour.

The following are some of the beauties which struck my eye on first beholding the falls, as especially worthy of notice. First, the water preserved the emerald hue of the lake, and exhibits at the centre of the *horse-shoe*, the most beautiful green, in contrast with the whitest foam and mist. It is a perfect transparency, frosted with snowy whiteness.—Second, in some places, the water, as it is precipitated, preserves its liquid state for twenty or thirty feet, and has all the brilliancy of an ice-bound forest when the sun shines upon it in winter. It then passes from a liquid state into the whitest foam and mist. This constant change of the falling mass from fluid to foam and mist, is what no human hand can paint.—Third, the falling water, after it has become greatly attenuated, meets a resisting atmosphere, which lifts it up, and gives it all the elegance of the most splendid drapery.—Fourth, the ascending mist, as it is driven down the river, falls in perpendicular lines, like rain descending from the clouds; when seen through the trees, in passing around Goat island, it is very picturesque.—Fifth, for several miles before reaching the falls, the place is indicated by white mist, which rises like smoke into clouds above.—Sixth, the rapids are more beautiful than I conceived.

Four or five views of the falls were particularly noticed. First the table rock. This was the point from which I had

my first view of the abyss, immediately at the foot of the *horse-shoe*. The horizontal strata of limestone which form the banks of the river below the falls, and the bed above, project some way over the abyss, and give the observer a most commanding view of the cascade around the whole circle of the *horse-shoe*, on the Canada side, with the perpendicular cliffs of Goat island and the fall beyond on the American side. One fourth of an acre of the solid rock was precipitated into the river the last year from this point, and another smaller section is beginning to show a chasm of several inches in diameter, the course of which may be traced for a great distance down the precipice. There is a passage under the sheet of water at the table rock, by which visitors are conducted many yards amid the rush of waters, striking with the vehemence of a hurricane, and covering every surrounding object with the densest rain, while the roar of the cataract drowns every voice but its own. I exchanged my usual dress for an oiled cloak and hat, and followed my guide to the spot called termination-rock. The wind occasioned by the rush of the water was so violent that I could scarcely stand or breathe at some moments. The whole scene was awfully terrific, especially when I raised my eye upwards, and saw the river rolling over vast projecting rocks, one hundred feet above me. The mist was so dense in the rear of the cataract, where I stood, that the view was somewhat obscured, and consequently more terrific and sublime. I turned as thoroughly drenched as though I had been plunged into the river.—Second, there is another fine view of the falls from the Canada side, from the top of the hill at the ferry.—Third, another eminently beautiful view is half way up the stairs on the American side.—Fourth, another, and indeed four or five views from different points on Goat island. Some of them are little if at all inferior to that from table rock.—Fifth, another good view of the falls may also be taken on the American side, two miles below, not far from the whirlpool, where is another great curiosity, especially taken in connexion with the rapids above it. A most brilliant rainbow is seen in a clear day, with different degrees of altitude according to circumstances. Sometimes it forms a complete arch springing up to heaven, with its ends resting on the white and boiling waves below. The tremendous cataract, when beheld in connexion with this splendid bow, can scarcely fail to suggest to the devout mind the subject of ruin and redemption. It was my privilege also to behold a beautiful lunar bow from the light of a nearly full moon.

A walk around Goat island presents one of the grandest

scenes which I ever beheld. The variety is great, and the views of the rapids pre-eminently fine. The island extends nearly to the head of the rapids, and gently divides the waters, which soon after dash and foam in dreadful violence.

A visit to Niagara is suited to lead the mind of a beholder up to God, and it may therefore be rendered a means of sanctification. I have seldom, if ever, spent an hour in devotion with more solemn awe and delight, and the descriptions of God and his works in the Bible have never seemed so grand, as when I repaired one morning before breakfast to the *stair-case* on the American side, for my morning devotions. "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." I read this and other passages with indescribable awe and delight. I listened while God seemed to speak through the thunderings of the great cataract before me. Surely "great is our Lord and of great power. His understanding is infinite." The 148th Psalm is unspeakably grand and beautiful, read at the foot of such a cataract. Still more so if read in the night season, during a lonely walk around Goat island, when every thing is hushed into silence, as if to hear the fall of waters echo the praises of the Almighty, in a deeper and more awful voice, while the full moon and twinkling stars look down from the cloudless sky and join in the solemn chorus which earth and heaven are sending up to their Creator. "Praise ye the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights. Praise him sun and moon; praise him all ye stars of light. Praise him ye heaven of heavens; and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded and they were created." When the mind has been raised by such sublime passages, and the glorious exhibition of divine power made visible to the eye at the foot of Niagara, to some just conceptions of God, every other portion of Scripture is read with corresponding emotion. The wrath of God against the impenitent appears more terrible, his love and condescension in sending his Son into the world more amazing, and the invitations of his mercy more melting. All this is because the mind is raised above the low and grovelling scenes of time, and made to entertain some faint views of what God is. What then must be the emotions which will be awakened in view of a dissolving world; when the Lord of heaven and earth "shall come in the clouds of heaven, to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe?"

The monument of General Brock, at Queenston, Upper Canada, is an interesting object. The view of the surrounding country, from the top of the pillar—one hundred and twenty-six feet high—is perhaps the finest in all this part of the country. The River Niagara leaves the rocky strata, through which it has for ages been wearing a passage, and its dark and deep green waters wind through a beautiful plain, ten miles broad, to lake Ontario, which is of course visible. Forts George, York, &c. are seen in the distance. May peace long bind together those who dwell on its opposing shores, and never again may its pure waters be reddened by their blood!—*Life of Cornelius.*

WHO SHALL BE IN HEAVEN?

ARE there few that be saved? the disciples of Christ asked, in a spirit of unhallowed curiosity, which their Lord repressed by the answer, Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many I say unto you will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

This is a very solemn and alarming declaration from the lips of him who has no pleasure at all in the death of him that dieth, but rather that he should turn from the wickedness of his ways and live. Pause, reader of the Christian Freeman, and think seriously on it. Are you one of the "many," who hope to be in heaven, yet make no preparation for it? You need to pause. However puny a thing this little address may be, yet God by his providence is affording you another of his very many gracious opportunities, in seizing your attention by the interesting inquiry prefixed to it. God who preserved you all your life long, has brought you to the closing month of 1835. A little month, and 1835 will be no more. A little month! Thousands will be in hell before its close. If you are not a child of God, how inexpressibly great a change must take place upon you, to prevent you from being one of the number, should the first morning of 1836 never dawn on you. Though you hope to be in heaven, still you hope that it will be a long time before you will be there. Yet should life be extended to its utmost limit for you, how very short will you think it, when about to be added to the congregation of the dead. Eighteen hundred and thirty-five has yielded a very rich harvest. It will be remembered in heaven by many. Many a ripe shock in 1835 has fallen in its season; and many a sheaf been gathered into the granary of heaven. Its last month

has now come; it will be soon gone. Are you prepared to speak forth boldly the interpretation of the last stroke of the clock for the departing year—the harvest is ended, the summer is past, and I am not saved! Sorry should I be, my dear friends, that the farewell of the old year to you should be "sleep on now." Suffer me to expostulate with you, while both of us stand on the narrow isthmus, the hair-breadth NOW, between the past with all its sin and the future with all its retribution. You hope to enter heaven when you *must* die; but you have so little love for heaven, that you keep it away far far from you. It is away in the mist of the future; and you are fully content that "shadows, clouds, and darkness" should continue to rest upon it. You profess to rejoice that heaven is a great inheritance. For such an inheritance you must surely wish a strong title. If you prize it as you should, the shadow of a doubt over it must be to you a sore grievance. Your doctrinal views are correct, I take for granted, from your being a reader of the Christian Freeman; you renounce self-righteousness; you profess to build on the sure foundation; you say that the provision for salvation made by Christ is ample; and, when applied, never yet failed. God has made it, and he will honour it. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered.—Right, all right. Jehovah has said it, and he will never deny his word. But what reference has all this to you? The question requires no discussion; shall believers be saved? God has settled that; the all-important question for you is, What must *I* do to be saved? Have you been justified? Do not, I entreat you, try to cheat conscience by saying, I *hope* so. Produce the evidence to satisfy yourself, to satisfy others. Where is the proof that you have had your pardon sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, so as to have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ? A mistake here is a terrific mistake, one that may send you with a lie in your right hand into the presence of your Judge. You hope for heaven, did you say? Your hope is deception if you have not mourned over your sins with a godly sorrow, and felt sin to be a very bitter thing; your hope will be at last as the giving up of the ghost, if you have not with your whole heart sought forgiveness and found it, and from gratitude for this unspeakable gift, and hearty inclination to God's service, are not doing the will of God sincerely and cheerfully.

If this is not your case, then your hope of heaven must be built on the supposition that there is falsehood in God, or

that his law and government will be subverted. As certainly as Christ spoke truth, your present state is this—THE WRATH OF GOD ABIDETH ON YOU! Read again these words in capitals; they are terrific; and then think that they dropped from his lips who never spoke a word unnecessarily harsh. *Abideth* on you—yes, that is the word; abideth on you wherever you go, wherever you are, in sorrow and in joy, in sickness and in health, in time and in eternity, on earth and in hell. Do not turn away, I beseech you, from this consideration. It will do you no good to turn away, for the wrath of God abideth on you, whether you are thinking of it or not. Better to think now than to begin to think in hell.

You hope to be in heaven. What would you do there; to what one of all its inhabitants could you be a companion; for what one of all its employments are you fitted; what one of all its joys would you relish? You would carry the same soul thither, the same love and hatred, the same feelings and habits, the very same character. Mere change of place could not change you. A joyous scene, to him whose heart is not in unison with it, only makes him more deeply sad. Away with the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride from the bed of the dying:—the contrast makes sorrow a heavier load. Insult not with the sight of dainties him whose soul loatheth meat. Heaven to an unholy man would be hell. He looks through all the shining ranks of its ten thousand times ten thousand, but there is no congenial spirit there, none of similar tastes, or dispositions, or sentiments, or pursuits. Amidst a multitude that no man can number, he is alone with conscience, alone with God; and that to him is hell. Your hope of heaven is false then, if you have no sympathy with the exercises of heaven, no assimilation of character to the inhabitants of heaven, no pleasure in those exercises which are begun on earth, and which will be continued in heaven for ever.

You hope to be in heaven, you say; yet you have no sincere pleasure in reading or hearing the Word of God. What a change, therefore, death must make upon your character, to enable you to behold with pleasure, face to face, his glory whose perfections are only dimly shadowed forth in his Word. You do not now love to meditate on sacred things, even occasionally for a little space. What a miraculous change, therefore, must death effect, if you shall delight to have these sacred things ever before you in all their perfection and all their glory. But death can work no such change: death is merely the separation of the body and soul; the body as it is, sinking

down to dust; the soul as it is, going away to its own place, either heaven or hell. On this side the grave, you have no taste for divine ordinances; how then, on the other side, shall you relish the God of ordinances? Here the high praises of our Lord grate upon your ear, how then could you endure to live with those for ever, whose business and delight is praise? Prayer is a burden to you now; you perhaps get through the forms of it regularly in your closet, or your family, but it is a cheerless, profitless ceremony—you have no heart for it; and 1835 is perhaps your thirtieth or fortieth year. Thirty or forty years of age, and yet you cannot pray! Oh, when are you to begin. Begin now, or never hope to spend eternity with Him who hears and answers prayer.

If your heart does not pray, you are a rebel still; and that rebel hopes to be for ever in the presence of his insulted king, and to be happy, unspeakably happy, there. What folly! You must have a new heart before you could bear to stand in his presence; you must love him—love him with all your soul—before your heaven can consist in being like him and doing his will. You no doubt admire virtue, and commend the good, and the honest expression of your wish is, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his;" yet you have no relish for the company of real saints, no communion of feeling with them, no heart for their spiritual conversation. To be with them even for an hour, when they are in their proper element, is a weariness. What a lot of misery would you feel it, to be shut up in heaven with them for ever. You would have nothing in common with them but bare existence, not a single taste or disposition in common to endear them to you, or make fellowship with them happiness. Would you know then, with certainty, where you shall spend eternity? It is not necessary for you to behold in prophetic vision the judgment day, or to search the records of heaven's eternal purpose—look to your own character, your own employments, objects, companions, pleasures; examine these, and know assuredly, that the elements of heaven or hell are growing up in you now; and if your employments, objects, companions, pleasures, are sinful, your character is sinful too; and the wages of sin is death.

Who, then, shall be in heaven? God shall be there, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the great Jehovah;—there is the court of his kingdom, and there the throne of his glory. There shall the holy angels be, his honoured servants that do his will and hearken to his word; and there, too, will be the redeemed from among men, who have washed their robes and made them

white in the blood of the Lamb. The sun shall be no more their light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto them, but the Lord shall be unto them an everlasting light, and their God their glory. Their sun shall no more go down, neither shall their moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be their everlasting light, and the days of their mourning shall be ended. The people shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of God's planting, the work of his hands, that he may be glorified.

All of them are holy, every one. They bear the same image, their dispositions, their natures, their employments, their motives, their hearts, are all one. They are one family, in one house, Christ is the elder brother, and God is the Father of them all. No ambition, no strife, no envy shall be there; all is union, harmony, love. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. Heaven must be holy; for love, and admiration, and praise, and obedience to God, reign every where; and the intercourse, the happy intercourse of all its inhabitants is most holy. Such a place must be happy. There shall be no night there, no want, no sorrow, no pain, nothing to hurt or annoy; it is the true Canaan of rest, where every soul, though expanded as an angel's, shall rest perfectly satisfied in the full enjoyment of God through all eternity. All the thoughts, and feelings, and engagements of every individual are in unison with one another, and with those of his companions; and God approves and smiles. But one thing is wanted to make this the height of bliss, and heaven has it. This society is never to be dissolved; this harmony never to be destroyed. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out. Who then shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, and who shall stand in his holy place? Christ himself has answered the question. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. They are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

A.

THE REV. ROBERT HALL.

HALL greatly enjoyed the evening parties of his friends. If any of his family happened to say the evening had been dull, he would reply, "I don't think so; it was very pleasant; I enjoyed it; I enjoy every thing." Yet Hall, at the same time, was grievously afflicted with rheumatism. What a contrast to Byron, who cries out under the self-inflicted pains of a vicious life, "There is nothing but misery in the world."

Hall, on being asked, had he read the life of Bishop Watson, replied he had, and that it lowered his estimate of the Bishop's character. Being asked, why? He added, "Poor man! he married Public Virtue in his early days, but seemed ever afterward to be quarrelling with his wife."

Of a neighbouring minister, greatly addicted to secular pursuits, Hall remarked, "The head of Mr. ——— is so full of every thing but religion, that it seems difficult to account for his continuing to preach: one might be tempted to fancy that he has a *Sunday Soul*, which he screws on in due time, and takes off again every Monday morning.

A clergyman, present at a public dinner given by the Archbishop of Canterbury, mentioned that the Archbishop's chaplain said grace, both before and after dinner. Mr. Hall observed, that it was a gratifying mark of respect to the chaplain when sitting at the same table. "You mistake," said the clergyman, "the chaplain did not dine at the same table, but in another room, from which he was called in twice to say grace." Mr. Hall exclaimed in astonishment, "So this is being great!! His Grace not choosing to present his own requests to the King of kings, calls in a deputy to take up his message. A great man indeed! a very great man!!"

Hall being informed that a rich man in the neighbourhood, by no means celebrated for liberality, had attended to a tale of distress without relieving it, he said, "Yes, yes, he would listen, but without inclining his head. He may lend a distant ear to the murmuring of the vale beneath, but he remains like a mountain covered with perpetual snow."

"Was not Dr. Kippis a clever man?" said Dr. Gregory to Hall. "He might be a very clever man by nature," replied Hall, "but he laid so many books on his head, that his brain could not move." An admirable lesson to those who read much but think little!

It is well known that sectarian and intolerant bigots often

affect to pray for those who are the objects of their hatred. Such prayers, in spirit and in effect, are curses. They spring from malevolence, and are offered in hypocrisy and impiety. They are employed as weapons of religious agitation, and with the view of imposing on the multitude; such prayers are like what the Scripture says of men fasting, that they may smite with the fist of wickedness. They are fully in the spirit of the accuser of the brethren. Hall, who was all his life passionately devoted to the cause of civil and religious liberty, was informed that Bishop Horsley, who was a courtier and a partizan of arbitrary principles, had publicly prayed for him. "Such prayer," replied Hall, "I regard in the light of an *indictment;* but there is one consolation, it is the prayer of the *righteous* man only, which availeth much."

The account which Dr. Gregory, in his memoir, gives of Hall's preaching, is highly entertaining and instructive. The commencement of his sermons did not excite much expectation in strangers. He began with hesitation, and often in a very low and feeble tone, coughing frequently, as though he were oppressed with asthmatic obstructions. As he proceeded, his manner became easy and graceful, and at length highly impassioned. His voice also acquired more flexibility, body, and sweetness; and in all his happier and more successful efforts, swelled into a stream of the most touching and impressive melody. The farther he advanced, the more spontaneous, natural, and free from labour, seemed the progression of thought. One thought was succeeded by another, and that by another and another, each more weighty than the preceding—each more calculated to deepen and render permanent the ultimate impression. As he advanced to his practical application, all his mental powers were shewn in the most palpable but finely balanced exercise. His mind would collect itself and come forth with a luminous activity, proving how vast and in some important senses, how irresistible those powers were. In such seasons he communicated universal animation; his congregation would seem to partake of his spirit, and think and feel as he did; to be fully influenced by the presence of the objects which he had placed before them; fully actuated by the motives which he had enforced with such energy and pathos.

All was doubtless heightened by his singular rapidity of utterance—by the rythmical structure of his sentences, calculated at once for the transmission of the most momentous truths, for the powers of his voice, and for the convenience of breathing freely at intervals—and more than all, by the unequivocal

earnestness and sincerity which pervaded the whole, and by the eloquence of his heart-speaking countenance and penetrating eye. In his sublime strains, not only was every faculty of the soul enkindled and in entire operation, but his very features seemed fully to sympathize with the spirit, and to give out, nay, to *throw* out, thought and sentiment and feeling.

From the commencement of his discourse an almost breathless silence prevailed, deeply solemnizing from its singular intenseness. Not a sound was heard but the preacher's voice—scarcely an eye but was fixed upon him—not a countenance that he did not watch, and read, and interpret, as he surveyed them again and again with his rapid, ever-excursive glance. As he advanced and increased in animation, five or six of the auditors would be seen to rise and lean forward over the front of their pews, still keeping their eyes upon him. Some new or striking sentiment would in a few minutes cause others to rise in like manner; shortly afterwards still more, and so on, until, long before the close of the sermon, it often happened that a considerable portion of the congregation were standing;—every eye directed to the preacher, yet now and then for a moment glancing from one to another, thus transmitting and reciprocating thought and feeling. Mr. Hall himself, though manifestly absorbed in his subject, conscious of the whole, receiving new animation from what he then witnessed, reflecting it back upon those who were already alive to the inspiration, until all that were susceptible of thought and emotion, seemed wound up to the utmost limit of elevation on earth—when he would close, and they reluctantly and slowly resume their seats.

In 1812, visiting Bristol, he preached on the subject of being "dead in trespasses and sins." The concluding appeals were remarkably sublime and awful. The moment he had delivered the last sentence, Dr. Ryland, the pastor, hastened part of the way up the pulpit stairs, and while tears trickled down his venerable face, exclaimed with a vehemence which astonished both the preacher and the congregation, "Let all that are alive in Jerusalem pray for the dead that they may live."

1814, Mr. Hall, while preaching among his old friends at Cambridge, just before he commenced the application of his sermon, uttered a short but very fervent ejaculatory prayer, during which the whole congregation arose from their seats. Mr. Hall seemed surprised for a moment, and but for a moment, and remained in prayer for about five minutes. He then resumed his sermon, and continued preaching for more than twenty minutes, in such a strain of magnificent and overwhelming eloquence, as

the extraordinary incident might be expected to produce from powers and feelings like his, the *whole congregation standing until the close of the sermon.*

PERSECUTION OF THE NATIVE CHRISTIANS IN CHINA.

Soon after the mournful tidings of the decease of Dr. Morrison, the father of the Protestant Mission in China, intelligence was received of the persecution of the flock over which he had so fondly watched, and that the few scholars under instruction were dispersed, a number of books prepared for circulation seized and burnt, the distribution of books interrupted, the little church of Christ in China scattered by the hostility of the public authorities, a number of them seized, and subjected to imprisonment and stripes. We have now the pleasing intelligence of the safety and liberation of those who were in bonds for their attachment to the Lord Jesus. The chief events connected with the recent trials of the native Christians are narrated in the following letter, written by Leang Afa on board the ship in which he proceeded to Singapore.

Letter from Leang Afa.

Having obtained of our Lord and Saviour the aid of the Holy Spirit, for several years I have been enabled to persevere in the promulgation of the Gospel, and have urged my countrymen to cast away their idols, and serve only the Creator of all things. By the abundant grace of the Saviour, the Holy Spirit has been sent down to renew the hearts of more than ten persons. These have all received the rite of baptism; and believing in Jesus for the remission of their sins, serve the Lord God with one heart, and walk according to the precepts of the Gospel. Their names are Le She, Leang Atih, Leang Achin, Leang Asun, Leang Ataou, Le Asin, Chow Asan, Woo Achang, Ashun, Afuh, Lew Chechang, and Keuh Agang.

For three or four years I have been constantly in the habit of circulating the Scripture lessons; both in the city of Canton and in the neighbouring villages, and every where many, received them joyfully, while those who would not were few. This year the triennial examination of the literary candidates from all parts of the province was held in the provincial city (Canton); and it was my desire quickly to distribute the books among them all. Therefore, on the 20th of August, with

Woo Achang, Chow Asan, and Leang Asun, I commenced and distributed more than 1,000 sets (5,000 volumes) of the Scripture Lessons, which were received with gladness by all the students, and without the least disturbance. This rejoiced our hearts; and the next day we distributed another 1,000 sets in the same manner, and without any trouble. On the third day, when several hundred sets were circulated, a police officer seized Woo Achang, with a set of the books, and took him before the chief magistrate of the district of Nanhae; who, when he had examined the books, bid the officer not to interfere with a matter of so small importance. The police officer, therefore, dropped the business, and Woo Achang returned. On the fourth day, perceiving that the magistrate did not interfere with the distribution of the Scripture Lessons and tracts, we proceeded with our work. But when a few hundred had been scattered, the police-officer came with attendants, and seized ten sets of the Scripture Lessons with Afuh, one of the distributors, and was taking them away, when Afuh broke from the officer and returned. The next day, August 25th, I heard that the police-officer took the books and went and reported the case to the chefoo (the chief magistrate of the department of Qwangchowtoo); and supposing that he would send men to seize us, we put all the books that remained into boxes, and removed them to another place. The following day I returned to my house in the country. On the 31st, the chefoo sent officers to my residence (in the city), and seized Chow Asan and his partner Akae, and brought them before him for trial. Akae, being interrogated, declared that he knew nothing of our arrangements concerning the books. Upon this, the chefoo commanded his attendants to drag him away, and give him forty blows on the face. This beating was so severe, that it rendered Akae unable to speak. But when Chow Asan was examined, he disclosed every thing, both concerning the Scripture Lessons and our tracts. The next day the chefoo sent in pursuit of me a great number of his men; who being unsuccessful in their search, went on the 2nd of September, conducted by Chow Asan, and seized Woo Yingfae, one of the printers. September 4th, Chow Asan went with the men to a neighbouring village, where they seized Atseih, another of the printers, and brought him with four hundred copies of the Scripture Lessons, and the blocks, to the office of the chefoo. On the 6th of September, they took Achang, one of the men who had been employed in cutting the blocks.

On the 8th, I heard of all these proceedings, and immediately took my wife and daughter and fled to Keangmun. The next day the chefoo sent two government boats with about a hundred men to my native village to seize my whole family, male and female. But not finding any of us, they seized three of my kindred and every thing in my house, the doors of which they sealed up. The took away all the domestic animals from my kindred. And they continued going from place to place seeking for my family; but they sought in vain. On the 16th, they returned to Canton, and there seized one of my relatives, Wangae. Another of my kindred came secretly, and told me all that had transpired, Immediately I took my wife and child and fled to Chihkan, where I remained several days.

At length my money was all expended; there was no way to escape, and I dared not return to Canton lest I should fall into the hands of the police-officers. I thereupon directed my wife to go to the city, and send a messenger requesting Mr. Bridgman to assist me with money to purchase food, and if necessary, to enable me to flee to some other place. But, unexpectedly, he had gone to Macao, and she was obliged to return without having obtained any assistance. I then returned with my family to Keangmun; and seeing myself entirely destitute of money, and there being no one of whom I could borrow, I earnestly prayed to God to grant us his gracious assistance, and afford me protection in a visit to Mr. Bridgman at Macao. Thanks to the protecting mercy of God, I reached Macao in safety. And when I met Mr. Bridgman, the sorrow of my heart was so extreme, that I could not refrain from weeping bitterly; but he, seeing my sorrow, told me not to grieve, because Agang and Mr. Morrison had sent men to the office of the chefoo, and ascertained that for 800 dollars all the persons who had been taken could be liberated, and the pursuit after myself and family be abandoned. This alleviated my grief, though Mr. Bridgman added that the arrangements were not yet settled, and that he must wait for another letter from Canton. He gave me twenty-four dollars to carry to my family, and directed me to come again immediately to Macao. I thanked him, and went home directly; but when I told my wife that the difficulty was settled, she could hardly credit my words, and remained half believing and half doubting. I then gave her the money, and the same day I returned to Macao. After waiting two days at Mr. Bridgman's house, he received Mr. Morrison's letter, informing him that it was finally agreed that all the prisoners should be liberated for 800 dollars, but that the fooyuen

(the lieutenant-governor of the province) insisted on my being apprehended. As soon as Mr. Bridgman learned these particulars, he took me and my son Atih in a fast-boat to Captain Parry's ship at Lintin; who, when he had heard of our calamities, most gladly and kindly entertained us in his ship.

Thus situated, I called to mind that all those who preach the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour must suffer persecution. I therefore meditated on Rom. viii. 31—39; on James v. 11; and on 1 Peter v. 10. And though I cannot equal the patience of our Saviour, of Paul, or Job, in enduring suffering, yet I desire to imitate the ancient saints, and to keep my heart in peace.

October 18*th*, 1834.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 16.

Mr. Nott, a Missionary in the South Sea Islands, having read, on one occasion, the 3d chapter of the gospel by John to a number of the natives, some of them appeared deeply impressed. When he had finished the seventeenth verse, one of them, much affected, interrupted him, asking, "What words were those you read? What sounds were those I heard? Let me hear those words again."

Mr. Nott again read the verse, God so loved, &c., when the poor Pagan rose from his seat, and said, "Is that true? Can that be true? God love the world, when the world not love him! God so loved the world as to give his Son to die, that man might not die! Can that be true?"

Mr. Nott read the verse again—told him it was true, and that it was the message God had sent to them. The overwhelming feelings of the wondering Pagan were too powerful for expression or restraint. He burst into tears; and as these rolled down his dark visage, he withdrew, to meditate in private on the amazing love of God which had that day touched his soul.

AGAINST A RAMBLING DISPOSITION.

A long conversation ensued about old times, while Slingsby was regaled with the best cheer which the farm house afforded

for he was hungry as well as way-worn, and had the keen appetite of a poor pedestrian. The early playmates then talked over their subsequent lives and adventures. Jack had but little to relate, and was never good at a long story. A prosperous life, passed at home, has little incident for narrative; it is those only, who are tossed about the world, that are the true heroes of story. Jack had stuck by the paternal farm, followed the same plough that his forefathers had driven, and waxed richer and richer, as he grew older. As to Tom Slingsby, he was an excellent exemplification of the old proverb, "A rolling stone gathers no moss." He had sought his fortune about the world without ever finding it, being a thing oftener found at home than abroad. He had been in all kinds of situations, and had learned a dozen different modes of making a living; but had found his way back to his native village rather poorer then when he left it, his knapsack having dwindled down to a scanty bundle.

It is difficult to determine between lots in life, where each is attended with its peculiar discontents. He who never leaves his home repines at his monotonous existence, and envies the traveller, whose whole life is a constant tissue of wonder and adventure; while he who is tossed about the world, looks back with many a sigh to the safe and quiet shore which he has abandoned. I cannot help thinking, however, that the man who stays at home, and cultivates the pleasures and comforts daily springing up around him, stands the best chance for happiness. There is nothing so fascinating to a young mind as the idea of travelling; and there is witchcraft in the old phrase found in every nursery tale of "going to seek one's fortune." A continual change of place and change of object, promises a continual succession of adventure and gratification of curiosity. But there is a limit to all our enjoyments, and every desire bears its death in its gratification. Curiosity languishes under repeated stimulants, novelties cease to excite surprise, until at length we cannot wonder even at a miracle. He who has sallied forth into the world, like poor Slingsby, full of sunny anticipations, finds too soon how different the distant scene becomes when visited. The smooth place roughens as he approaches; the wild place becomes tame and barren; the fairy tints that beguiled him on, still fly to the distant hill, or gather upon the land which he has left behind, and every part of the landscape seems greener than the spot he stands on.—*Irvine.*

THE LATE DR. BELFRAGE.

THIS eminent divine was minister in Falkirk for forty-one years; distinguished during that long period for diligence and fidelity in the discharge of his office. He was a laborious student, and deeply versed in the Scriptures. His many publications are monuments of his varied talents and acquirements, and have been extensively read, with applause and profit, throughout all denominations. By his death, the United Secession Church of Scotland has lost one of the many distinguished men who have spread her fame over the Christian world. Among his writings are "Addresses at the Lord's Table," 2 vols.: "Discourses to the Young:" "Discourse to Families:" "Essays," and "Lectures on the Shorter Catechism," 2 vols. Besides these and several others, he was a constant contributor to the religious magazines—such as "The Evangelical Magazine," "The Christian Monitor," "The Theological Magazine," and "The United Secession Magazine."

LITERARY GEMS.

ANECDOTE OF DR. WAUGH.—The late Dr. Waugh, of London, was a distinguished preacher; an eminent light of the Secession Church in that city for many years. George III. greatly revered him; going sometimes incognito to hear him, and calling him the king of Dissenters.—*Dr. Cox on Quakerism.*

DR. JOHNSON'S OPINION OF MODERN NOVELS.—To bring a lover, a lady, and a rival into the farce; to entangle them in contradictory obligations, perplex them with oppositions of interest, and harass them with the violence of desires inconsistent with each other; to make them meet in rapture and part in agony; to fill their mouths with hyperbolical joy and outrageous sorrow; to distress them as nothing human ever was distressed, to deliver them as nothing human ever was delivered, is the business of a modern novelist. For this, probability is violated, life is misrepresented, language is depraved.

BURKE'S OPINION OF PULPIT POLITICS.—Politics and the pulpit are terms that have very little agreement. No

sound ought to be heard in the church but the healing sound of Christian charity. The cause of civil liberty and civil government gains as little as that of religion by this confusion of duties. Those who quit their proper character to assume what does not belong to them, are, for the greater part, ignorant of the character they leave and the character they assume. Wholly unacquainted with the world in which they are so fond of meddling, and inexperienced in all its affairs, on which they pronounce with so much confidence, they have nothing of politics but the passions they excite. Surely the church is a place where one day's *truce* ought to be allowed to the dissensions and animosities of mankind.

BURKE ON WHAT PROTECTS A PEOPLE FROM JUDGMENTS.—London is the sink of vice; but her hospitals and charitable institutions, whose turrets pierce the skies, like so many electric conductors, avert the wrath of heaven.

DRENNAN ON THE CHANGE OF TIMES.—True, the times are changed—yet what are the times? The sun still makes the season, and the earth produces the harvest; but it is the change in men's dispositions that unmake the times: for truth is still the same, and rests on the basis of its immortality.

PRESENT HELP.—The Rev. James Mair, late of Linton, was appointed to preach at Gateshaw, in the South of Scotland. During the singing of the Psalms, his text and all he had prepared escaped him. That part of the Psalm just then singing fixed upon his mind, "O love the Lord, all ye his saints." This he gave out for his text. The arrangement and illustration presented themselves clearly and vividly to his mind. He found himself in a most pleasant frame. In his audience, he saw serious attention and many tears. Never had he enjoyed, did he declare, such a day of the Son of Man in his power and glory. Has not Christ promised, "Lo, I am with you alway?"—*The Pulpit.*

LET THEM ALONE.—During the revival which took place in New Haven, America, in 1832, at a meeting for inquirers appeared a Universalist preacher. His object was to catch and to cavil. After the close of the meeting he remained, and, addressing himself to Dr. S——, endeavoured to draw him into a controversy. Dr. S—— said to him, "Sir, I have no time to engage in an argument with you now; it is 6 o'clock, and I have to preach at 7." "But, Sir," said the Universalist, "it is your duty, if you think me in error, to undeceive me."

"No," says Dr. S——, "the Bible tells me to let you alone." "I deny that the Bible has any such command," replied the other. "It certainly has," replied Dr. S——, "and I will give you chapter and verse for it. Matt. xv. 14, Christ tells his disciples respecting the Pharisees, '*Let them alone;* they be blind leaders of the blind; and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.'"—*New-York Evangelist.*

THE BIBLE.—The Duke of Sussex, whose passion for collecting copies of the different editions of the Scriptures is well known, has in his library no fewer than 4,000 volumes of Bibles, comprising a copy of almost every edition issued from the press. This collection he intends to bequeath to Trinity College, Cambridge.

THE MOTHER OF R. L. EDGEWORTH.—On the morning of the day, says R. L. Edgeworth in his Memoirs, on which my mother died, she called me to her bed-side, and told me with a sort of pleasure, that she felt she should die before night. She expressed the following sentiment, "If there is a state of retribution in another world, I must be happy, for I have suffered during the greater part of my life, and I know that I did not deserve it by my thoughts or actions." What ignorance of the Bible and of the heart! Better was the language of dying Baxter, "Justly might God condemn me for the best work I ever did." Better the expiring words of the martyr, Lambert, "None but Christ; none but Christ." One or two of the dying injunctions of Edgeworth's mother are worthy of remembrance. "My son, learn to say No." "Resolve to finish; never procrastinate."

BISHOP BURNETT.—Bishop Burnett in his charges vehemently condemned pluralities. In his first visitation, he urged the authority of St. Bernard; who, on being consulted by one of his followers, whether he might accept of two benefices, replied, "How will you be able to serve them both?" "I intend," answered his inquirant, "to officiate in one of them by deputy." "Will your deputy be damned for you too?" cried Bernard. "Believe me, you may preach by proxy, but you must be damned in person." This expression so affected the Rev. Mr. Kelsey, then present, that he immediately resigned the Rectory of Bemeston, in Berks, which he held as a plurality.

THE POWER OF ELOQUENCE.—Never was there a more striking example of the power of eloquence, than the effect

produced by the speech of Burke, delivered at the bar of the House of Lords, on opening the impeachment of Warren Hastings. He was describing the atrocities committed in India by Debi Sing, one of the alleged agents of Hastings. A convulsive sensation of horror, affright, and smothered execration, says Prior in his life of Burke, pervaded all the male part of his hearers, and audible sobbings and screams, attended with tears and faintings, the female. His own feelings were scarcely less overpowered. He dropped his head upon his hands, and for some minutes was unable to proceed. To relieve him, the Prince of Wales moved the adjournment of the debate. In this part of his speech, Mr. Burke's descriptions were more vivid, more harrowing, and more terrific, than human utterance, or either fact or fancy, perhaps, ever formed before. The agitation of most people was very apparent. Mrs. Sheridan fainted. Several others were as powerfully affected. Mrs. Siddons is said to have been of the number. The testimony of Hastings himself, the accused party, is perhaps the strongest ever borne to the powers of any speaker of any country. "For half an hour," said Mr. Hastings, "I looked up at the orator in a reverie of wonder; and, during that space I felt myself the most culpable man on earth;" adding, however, "but I recurred to my own bosom, and there found a consciousness that consoled me under all I heard and all I suffered."

Settling Accounts.—An irreligious man boasted to a minister that he spent the Sabbath in settling his accounts. "You will find," said the minister, "that the last day will be spent in the same manner."

A Puzzle.—What is the reason, papa, said a little boy to his father, after a clergyman had asked a blessing before dinner, that a blessing is asked when the minister dines here, and never at any other time?

King William's Argument for Predestination.—Did I not believe predestination, said King William to Bishop Burnett, I could not believe in Providence; for it would be absurd to suppose that a being of infinite wisdom would act without a plan, for which plan predestination is only another name.

All Things for Good.—The Rev. Bernard Gilpin, when on his way to London to be tried by the Popish party, in Queen Mary's time, got his leg broken by a fall, which put a stop for a time to his journey. The person in whose cus-

tody he was, took occasion to retort on him a remark he often made, that whatever happens is for our good, by asking him, "whether the breaking of his leg was for his good?" He replied, "He made no question but it was." And so it proved, for before he was able to travel Queen Mary died. Being thus providentially rescued, he returned to Houghton through crowds of people expressing the utmost joy, and blessing God for his deliverance.

THE NOVEL GIVING WAY TO THE BIBLE.—A pious servant having been sent by a gentleman's family to a neighbouring town to procure novels, adopted the innocent stratagem of inserting tracts between the leaves. They were read, and the novel gave way to the Bible.

FIRE LOW.—This was Cromwell's advice to his soldiers, *fire low*. If our eloquence be fired over the heads of our hearers, we shall do little execution. By levelling *low* we stand a chance of hitting their hearts as well as their heads. We must come down to their wants and wishes, their hopes and fears, their families and their fire sides. The moon gives us greater light than all the fixed stars together, although she is much smaller than any of them; the reason is, the stars are more distant, but the moon is nearer.

DANGER OF TRUSTING TO AN IMAGINARY LIGHT WITHIN.

PREACHING in a certain sea-port village, where many of the "Friends" reside, Dr. Waugh used the following benevolent lamentation with regard to the danger of superseding the light of the Bible by a supposed light within:—"I am told my friends that your harbour is dangerous—that it abounds in shoals, rocks, and breakers, which many a skilful mariner has braved in vain; that there have been numerous dismal shipwrecks on your immediate coast, but that of late there have been proportionally few. Do you know the reason? Doubtless you do. The authorities of the country have, at great expense, humanely erected a large light-house, towering to the sky, and shedding, without change, its faithful radiance far and wide on the ocean. Now the pilots can bring a vessel into moorings almost with no inconvenience, and simply by steering according to that fixed and friendly light. This you know.

But what would you think of a proud East Indiaman, with a rich freight on board, who, getting a strange aversion to that light, should light a taper in the cabin, and steer by *the light within?* Would you not remonstrate if you could? But suppose you had remonstrated in vain, what would you apprehend from such hardihood? What but shivered timbers and a dismal wreck, since all experience is in favour of the light-house as the only safe mark to steer by? And I, my friends, am afraid of some of you in this village—afraid that your hopes and souls will perish on the rocks of error. Instead of steering for the haven of eternity by the light-house of the Bible, which the Eternal King has provided to that very end, you are, I hear, many of you who reside in this place, abandoning your course to the uncertain and insufficient guidance of a *light within!* Alas! for the freight, the precious freight!—*Dr. Cox.*

NOTICE.

The Advocate of Moral Reform.

THIS is a very interesting Monthly Periodical, at the low price of *Two Shillings* per annum. It has for its main object the suppression of licentiousness, one of the crying evils under which our country and the world groan. The Bible assures us that "Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge;" yet how little is its solemn denunciation regarded. The readers of the "Advocate," and we hope for the sake of public morality that they will be numerous, will learn with sorrow that in France, about *one-third* of all the children born are *illegitimate*—that the number of prostitutes in the United Kingdom, amounts to *several hundred thousands*—and that there are upwards of *one thousand* prostitutes in the town of Belfast! Let any Christian mind reflect on the multitudes of souls thus hurrying on to ruin. Nor is it the abandoned and unfortunate prostitutes alone, whose abominations expose them to the judgments of a holy God. At least double the number of the opposite sex—and among these many who bear a high head in society—deserve to wear the same brand of public infamy, which absurd and corrupt custom stamps alone on the fallen female. Men, in their depraved hearts, may acquit, but God in his righteousness will condemn the whoremonger. We regard the Editor of "*The Advocate of Moral Reform*," as a benefactor of mankind, and we call on the religious public to encourage him in the benevolent enterprize, to which he has brought so much zeal and devotedness.

UNITED ASSOCIATE SYNOD OF SCOTLAND.

THIS body commenced its half-yearly meetings in Broughton Place Church, on Monday evening, the 5th October. The Rev. David

Ronald, late Moderator, preached from Rom. xiv. 19. "Let us therefore follow after the things that make for peace," &c. The Rev. Adam Thompson, of Coldstream, was elected Moderator for the ensuing half-year. On Tuesday forenoon, the Synod spent a part of the sederunt in prayer and praise. It was resolved that an address be presented to the king, expressing the Synod's approbation of the Abolition of Slavery in the dependencies of Great Britain, and imploring his Majesty to employ the energy and wisdom of his government to secure to the emancipated negroes all the advantages which the abolition of slavery is intended to confer. On Wednesday forenoon, there was presented a communication from the Presbyterian Synod of the Relief Church, acknowledging the receipt of the communication which had been sent from the Secession Synod, and expressing a desire to cultivate intercourse, for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of a union betwixt the Relief and Secession Churches. A variety of petitions from sessions and congregations on this subject, were presented and read. Some of these were for immediate union; others craved delay. The Synod agreed to express satisfaction in the friendly communication from the Synod of Relief, and to renew their expression of esteem and affection for the Relief Church; and to enjoin Presbyteries and Sessions to take the subject of a union into prayerful consideration, and to report at next meeting of Synod. On Wednesday afternoon, the Synod entered upon the consideration of their Home and Foreign Missions, commencing with prayer and praise. Interesting reports were read, from which it appeared, that the Synod have sent out *nine* Missionaries to Canada, and *two* to Jamaica. And that *three* additional Missonaries are about to proceed to the West Indies. Besides these the Synod support a number of Mission stations at home. Mr. Watson, Missionary from Jamaica, and Mr. Glen, late Missionary at Astrachan, addressed the court on the subject of Missions. Mr. Smart, of Paisley, and Mr. Johnston, of Nicholson-street, Edinburgh, gave an account of the religious state of certain districts of the Highlands, where those gentlemen had been engaged in itinerating during a part of the summer. The Synod directed the committee of Missions, to procure persons acquainted with the Gaelic language, to be employed as Catechists in the Highlands. Agreed, also, that a deputation visit the congregations, to stir up a Missionary spirit, and to make collections for the Mission fund. On Thursday evening, the Synod entered upon the consideration of an overture for having only one meeting of Synod in the year. The Synod agreed to remit this subject to the consideration of Presbyteries, to report at next meeting. The Synod then heard the report of the deputation appointed at last meeting to present a memorial from the Synod to his Majesty's ministers, against the coercive taxation of Seceders and other Dissenters, for building and endowing new churches in connexion with the Establishment. The report of the deputation gave great satisfaction. The committee appointed to consider the proposition that a statistical account of congregations should be annually transmitted by Sessions and Presbyteries to the Synod, gave in their report, containing a list of questions to which answers should be returned. The report was adopted, and the Synod agreed that statistical returns shall commence with the year 1836. The Synod understanding that bills for the improvement of some of the Universities of Scotland have

been introduced into the House of Commons during last session, agreed to express their satisfaction with these measures—their sense of the gratitude due to the public-spirited men who originated and supported them—their approbation of their general principles, as liberal and equitable, as well as of many of their details; and strongly impressed with the conviction that their most important interests, as connected with the education of their ministers and people, are deeply involved in the general state of education in Scotland, appoint a committee to watch the progress of the measures referred to, and particularly to use means, that by the removal of ecclesiastical tests, by which admission, whether of teachers or pupils, being Dissenters, into our great schools of literature is prevented or encumbered—the full advantages of these national institutions may be secured to members of the Secession Church, in common with their fellow-citizens. An overture from the Dunfermline Presbytery, respecting the publication of banns and the celebration of marriage, was referred to a committee. After voting the usual donations from the funds, to weak congregations and Missionary stations, the Synod was dismissed—its next meeting to be held in Broughton Place Church, Edinburgh, on the Monday evening immediately after the 3d Sabbath of April, 1836.

ORDINATIONS.

On Tuesday, the 3d inst., the Rev. Frederick Buick was ordained to the pastoral charge of the First Presbyterian Secession congregation of Ahoghill. The Rev. John Coulter, of Gilnahirk, preached the ordination sermon from 1 Cor. ix. 16, "Necessity is laid upon me; yea, wo is unto me if I preach not the Gospel." Presbyterian Church government was defended by the Rev. R. Wilson, of Belfast, who also conducted the solemnities of the ordination, and concluded the services by addressing a charge to pastor and people, on their respective duties and responsibilities. The attendance on the occasion, notwithstanding the wetness of the day, was respectable and crowded, and the whole of the services were listened to with the deepest interest. In the evening the Minister and Elders, with other friends, sat down to an excellent dinner, provided by the congregation. We congratulate the people of Ahoghill on the settlement of Mr. Buick. His character, as a young man of piety and talent, affords the highest hope of ministerial usefulness and efficiency.

Dungiven.—Many of our readers are aware that a new congregation has been organised in Dungiven, in connexion with the Presbyterian Secession Synod of Ireland. On Wednesday, November 25th, the Presbytery of Ahoghill proceeded to ordain the Rev. William M'Hinch to the pastoral care of that congregation. The Rev. R. Fleming, Bellaghy, preached the morning sermon. The Rev. S. Craig, Crossroads, ordained, and the Rev. John Wilson, Newtownlimavady, addressed minister and people. Although the day was severe, an immense concourse of people attended. The services, which were highly appropriate and impressive, were conducted in the Court-house, kindly granted for the purpose by Robert L. Ogilby, Esq. A new meeting-house, it is hoped, will soon be completed. On the night of Tuesday, the 24th November, one of the gables was blown down.

At the close of the ordination, upwards of sixty gentlemen sat down to dinner; and on the motion of Rev. Mr. Millar, Cookstown, a subscription was opened to repair the breach, and in the course of a few minutes upwards of £20 were subscribed. Much praise is due to all denominations, for the very liberal manner in which they have subscribed towards the erection of this meeting-house.

THE SCOTTISH AND LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETIES.

The Secretaries of these Societies, beg to inform such as collect for their funds, and ministers who take collections for them from their congregations, that they may obtain Missionary papers, by enquiring for them at *Mr. Rea, Tract Depository*, No 17, Waring-street; or at *Mr. M'Comb*, No 1, High-street.

WHAT IS THE WORLD?

The world is but a weary way,
Through which we walk to heaven;
A place to labour, watch, and pray,
Repent, and be forgiven.

The world is not a place of rest;
It never was designed
To satisfy the anxious breast,
Or feed the immortal mind.

The world is not a lasting home;
A brighter one above,
Is purchased by God's dying Son,
And offered us in love.

And all we need below the skies,
His love has kindly given,
To lure us from this world to rise,
And *seek our rest* in heaven.

Printed by James Wilson, 70, High-street.